Online Skills Academy

Virtual Listening Session – Questions

Participant Introductions

- 1. Describe your affiliation:
 - a. Educational institution or training provider
 - b. Technology provider
 - c. Workforce system operator
 - d. Business representative
 - e. Other

PURPOSE: General participant composition survey

- 2. If your affiliation is with an educational institution or training provider, please describe your roll:
 - a. Administration
 - b. Instruction
 - c. Policy making
 - d. Research
 - e. Other
- 3. If your affiliation is with the workforce system, please describe your roll:
 - a. Local workforce development agency
 - b. State workforce development agency
 - c. Research
 - d. Public policy entity
 - e. Other
- 4. If your affiliation is as a business representative, please describe your role:
 - a. Technology provider/vendor
 - b. Service provider/vendor
 - c. Workforce development
 - d. Other
- 5. If your affiliation is as a business representative, please describe the size of your company:
 - a. Less than 50 employees
 - b. 50-100 employees
 - c. 100-500 employees
 - d. 500-1,000 employees
 - e. Over 1,000 employees

Online Learning for Unemployed Workers and other Adult Learners

<u>PROPOSITION #1</u>: Online learning, including educational resources, learning tools, and full online courses is a low-cost, easily accessible option for providing career training to adult learners that range in occupational skill level, and including unemployed and long term unemployed workers.

Starting place – consider the adult learners you serve on a daily basis. How would you characterize their occupational skill level:

- Low
- Middle to High Skilled

/* start section that focuses on low skill learners */

PURPOSE:

To determine views on use of online learning as a means of providing training for unemployed and adult learners.

With respect to low-skill learners:

Of the low-skill learners you serve, what percentage are interested in online learning as an alternative to traditional classroom learning:

- Less than 25 percent
- 25 to 50 percent
- 50 to 75 percent
- More than 75 percent

To define barriers to adoption and widespread use and whether technology can be used to overcome these barriers.

Of your low-skill learners who have expressed interest in online learning, what percentage are adequately suited for online learning:

- Less than 25 percent
- 25 to 50 percent
- 50 to 75 percent
- More than 75 percent

How do you assess their suitability for online learning:

- In-person interview
- Assessment
- Do not assess

If an assessment or interview is conducted, what criteria do you use to determine suitability:

- Digital literacy skills
- Soft/essential skills
- Academic history
- Subject matter or program relevance
- Interest

If a formal assessment is used, please let us know which:

Do you provide any pre-enrollment services or training to ensure that low-skill learners are prepared for online learning:

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

What do you consider the most important benefits of online learning for low skill adult learners?

- Self-paced
- Customizable learning experience
- Price (low cost)
- Easy to access and readily available
- Flexible scheduling and course enrollment
- Credential attainment
- Frequent and timely feedback on progress

Self-Paced: When your low skill learners take self-paced modules or courses do they take more or less than the average amount of time to complete the modules or courses?

- More time
- Less time
- It depends

Price: When low-skill learners enroll in online learning for cost savings purposes, how do they typically use the cost savings?

- Towards other training expenses
- Towards non-training expenses

Access: Do low-skill learners typically access online learning using public computers, such as at an AJC or public library or on personal computers?

- Public computer
- Personal computer

Access: Do the public computers accessed by low-skill learners have sufficient bandwidth and current software to enable an optimal online learning experience?

- Yes
- No

Access: Do the personal computers used by low-skill learners:

- Computer or laptop
- Other mobile device
- Unknown

Flexible Scheduling: Over the course of a year, does flexible scheduling of online learning result in greater or fewer registrations of low-skill learners in training programs?

- Greater number of registration
- Fewer number of registrations

What do you consider the most significant weaknesses of online learning:

Accountability

- Access and other technical barriers
- Credentialing
- Availability of quality online learning
- Availability of relevant online learning
- Availability of in-person interaction with instructors or peers
- Other

Other:

If all the significant weaknesses were addressed, would you consider online learning more, equal, or less effective than traditional learning for low-skill learners:

- More effective
- Equally as effective
- Less effective
- Unsure

Are there certain supportive services or strategies that need to be in place to ensure that low-skill learners are successful in online learning:

- In-personal instruction
- Advising and career planning
- Tutoring or coaching
- Assessment

Could technology replace or complement any of these supportive services or strategies?

- Yes
- No

If no, please elaborate:

For those that feel online learning would still be less effective for low-skill learners, please elaborate on why and whether you believe that technology can be leveraged to provide effective training:

If the cost of offering online learning were significantly lowered or free, would your organization be more likely or less likely to offer online learning for low-skill adults?

- More likely
- Less Likely
- Depends on other factors (such as subject matter, individual suitability for training, administrative barriers, etc.)

/* end section for low-skill learners */

/* start section that focuses on needs of middle to high skilllearners */

With respect to middle to high skill learners:

Of the middle to high skill learners you serve, what percentage are interested in online learning as an alternative to traditional classroom learning:

- Less than 25 percent
- 25 to 50 percent
- 50 to 75 percent
- More than 75 percent

Of your middle to high skill learners who have expressed interest in online learning, what percentage are adequately suited for online learning:

- Less than 25 percent
- 25 to 50 percent
- 50 to 75 percent
- More than 75 percent

How do you assess their suitability for online learning:

- In-person interview
- Assessment
- Do not assess

If an assessment or interview is conducted, what criteria do you use to determine suitability:

- Digital literacy skills
- Soft/essentialskills
- Academic history
- Subject matter or program relevance
- Interest

If a formal assessment is used, please let us know which:

Do you provide any pre-enrollment services or training to ensure that middle to high skill learners are prepared for online learning:

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

What do you consider the most important benefits of online learning for middle to high skill adult learners:

- Self-paced
- Customizable learning experience
- Price (low cost)
- Easy to access and readily available
- Flexible scheduling and course enrollment

- Credential attainment
- Frequent and timely feedback on progress

Self-Paced: When your middle to high skill learners take self-paced modules or courses do they take more or less than the average amount of time to complete the modules or courses:

- More time
- Less time
- It depends

Price: When middle to high skill learners enroll in online learning for cost savings purposes, how do they typically use the cost savings:

- Towards other training expenses
- Towards non-training expenses

Access: Do middle to high skill learners typically access online learning using public computers, such as at an AJC or public library or on personal computers:

- Public computer
- Personal computer

Access: Do the public computers accessed by middle to high skill learners have sufficient bandwidth and current software to enable an optimal online learning experience:

- Yes
- No

Access: Do the personal computers used by middle to high skill learners:

- Computer or laptop
- Other mobile device
- Unknown

Flexible Scheduling: Over the course of a year, does flexible scheduling of online learning result in greater or fewer registrations of middle to high skill learners in training programs:

- Greater number of registration
- Fewer number of registrations

What do you consider the most significant weaknesses of online learning:

- Accountability
- Access and other technical barriers
- Credentialing
- Availability of quality online learning
- Availability of relevant online learning
- Availability of in-person interaction with instructors or peers
- Other

Other:

If all the significant weaknesses were addressed, would you consider online learning more, equal, or less effective than traditional learning for middle to high skill learners:

- More effective
- Equally as effective
- Less effective
- Unsure

Are there certain supportive services or strategies that need to be in place to ensure that middle to high skill learners are successful in online learning:

- In-personal instruction
- Advising and career planning
- Tutoring or coaching
- Assessment

Could technology replace or complement any of these supportive services or strategies:

- Yes
- No

If no, please elaborate:

For those that feel online learning would still be less effective for middle to high skill learners, please elaborate on why and whether you believe that technology can be leveraged to provide effective training:

If the cost of offering online learning were significantly lowered or free, would your organization be more likely or less likely to offer online learning for middle to high skill adults:

- More likely
- Less Likely
- Depends on other factors (such as subject matter, individual suitability for training, administrative barriers, etc.)

Online Learning for Unemployed Workers and other Adult Learners

<u>PROPOSITION #2</u>: Due to the limitations of technology, online format is currently more suitable for certain types of learning.

A Federal investment can catalyze technological changes necessary to make more types of learning suitable for an online format.

PURPOSE:
To determine
whether certain
types of
training
(occupation or
industry)

/* focus is on types of learning rather than industry */

Given the technology currently available, do you agree that there are certain types of learning that are more successful in an online format, for example in certain content areas:

- Yes
- No

To survey field for promising practices and identify gaps in offerings

Which are the most promising areas of learning for the online format:

- General education
- Remedial education
- Soft/essential skills training
- Job-specific skills training

Which of these areas are most improved in a blended or hybrid format:

- General education
- Remedial education
- Soft/essential skills training
- Job-specific skills training

If a significant investment in technology were possible, in which areas could this technology investment lead to increased suitability of online learning:

- Games or simulations as proxy for hands-on exercises
- Cohort and peer learning community features
- Supportive services
- Predictive student analytics to provide continuous feedback to instructors
- Formative or self-assessment tools to provide real-time feedback to learners
- Skills based assessments and assessment engines
- Other

What is the role of Federal investment in this area:

- Catalyze technological change
- Fund technology change
- Incentivize partnerships
- Establish credentialing standards
- None
- Other

General Education: What are examples of online learning resources that you are

currently using:

Are these resources free and open:

- Yes
- No

Remedial Education: What are examples of online learning resources that you are currently using?

Are these resources free and open:

- Yes
- No

Soft/Essential Skills: What are examples of online learning resources that you are currently using:

Are these resources free and open:

- Yes
- No

Job-specific skills training: What are examples of online learning resources that you are currently using?

Are these resources free and open:

- Yes
- No

Are there resources that currently do not exist that could be useful to your customers:

/* shift focus to industry sectors or occupations */

Which of the following are the most promising areas of learning for the online format:

- Computer science
- Finance
- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Scientific research
- Customer service and retail management
- Other

Please list the "other" areas you have selected:

Open Educational Resources (OER) for Low Cost Training

PURPOSE
To identify
concerns
involving OER
use and
adoption, best
practices, and
areas of
opportunity.

<u>PROPOSITION #3</u>: Open Educational Resources (OER) can be used to offer a quality, low-cost means of offering training that can result in a low-cost training option for adults.

A Federal investment can systematize adoption of quality OER and increase the quantity and quality of available OER resources to the benefit of both education/training providers and students.

/* insert 2 sentences in script about what is OER, such as 5 r's and the value proposition of an open policy */

Starting place – Please describe your familiarity with OER:

- Have not heard of OER
- Have heard of OER, but have not had the opportunity or interest in using
- Have provided training or education that utilizes OER
- Have create training or education programs using OER
- Upon review, have decided not to use OER

For those who decided not to use OER: Overall, do you think that the quality of OER is comparable with the quality of resources available in the traditional educational marketplace:

- Yes
- No

What are other reasons that you have decided not to use OER:

For those who are not opposed to OER (who have not selected option 5)
In your experience with OER, what are the biggest challenges you have faced:

- Finding OER, including the time it takes
- Evaluating the quality and relevance of OER
- Helping others understand the potential of OER
- Technical challenges, such as content to LMS compatibility

Finding OER: Relative to the time it takes to develop learning materials, does it take more or less time to locate and adapt OER:

- More time
- Less time
- Same amount of time

Finding OER: Which repositories do you most frequently search:

Finding OER: Does the discovery process of finding quality OER present a barrier to your willingness to use OER more? In other words, would you use more OER if it were easier to find:

- Yes
- No
- The discovery barrier is not the primary challenge

Assessing Quality: What are the most significant concerns involving the quality of OER:

- OER is relevant to institutional context
- OER is at the appropriate level of learning for student
- OER is represents current understanding in the field of study
- OER is appropriately licensed

Assessing Quality: Do you apply a standard rubric to evaluate the quality of OER:

- Peer or User review
- Quality Matters, QOCI, OCEP or other published rubric
- Accreditation standards for distance learning, such as CHEA recommendations
- Self-developed rubric

Technical Challenges: Does your current course delivery platform limit the type of OER content that you can adopt:

- Yes
- No

Technical Challenges: Please describe these challenges:

- Resource incompatible with LMS (general)
- Playback of resource requires installation of specific software
- File format of resource limits adaptation (such as PDF)

For those who have used OER in instruction (student experience)

Are students in courses where OER is used in instruction able to identify the portions of the course or course materials that are developed using OER:

- Yes
- No

In cases where OER is identifiable by students, how would they characterize the impact of OER on their learning experience:

- Positively affected the learning experience
- Negatively affected the learning experience
- Does not affect their experience, either positively or negatively

Has the use of OER impacted the ability of students to achieve learning objectives:

- Positively affected the student ability to achieve learning objectives
- Negatively affected the student ability to achieve learning objectives
- Does not affect student ability to achieve learning objectives, either positively or negatively

Open Platforms as the Foundation of a Sustainable Financial Model

<u>PROPOSITION #4</u>: An online educational delivery platform that is completely open and open source can be the foundation of a sustainable business model. This will allow learners access skills training no cost and provides financial incentive to platform providers to maintain the platform.

A Federal investment in the development of this open platform can seed innovation an active application development community where revenue stream from service providers sustains platform maintenance.

Do you have experience using an open educational delivery platform:

- Yes
- No

Which platforms are currently open:

Rank the most important functionalities or tools of a learning platform (open or closed) would have that would benefit you the most as you serve your customer:

- Competency mapping tool
- Assessment generating engine
- Content quality rating tool
- Student predictive analytics
- Interactive community tools

/* select multiple */

What services do you pay for on open online platforms and tools that you use today?

- Accessing content
- Technical assistance for content posting
- Credential attainment (BA, AA, or nationally recognized by industry)
- Career guidance
- Peer learning
- Practice tools
- Talent sourcing
- Advertising
- Other

What other services do you currently pay for:

What are possible business models would enable an active application development community:

Would a significant investment in one of these open platform components significantly influence your organization's investment in competency based learning:

- Open learning platforms
- Open competency based learning platforms
- Open competency authoring systems
- Open skills mapping systems
- Open competency assessment engines

- Open learning analytics engines
- Open interoperability standards/protocols that would support an open learning system

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open learning platforms:

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open competency based learning platforms:

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open competency based authoring systems:

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open skills mapping systems:

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open competency assessment engines:

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open learning analytics engine:

In your experience, what are the most robust, highest quality open interoperability standards/protocols:

Online Career Pathway in High Demand Sectors Offer Credential Attainment

<u>PROPOSITION #5:</u> An online career pathway in a high-demand sector allows adult learners to earn credentials necessary for employment when designed with employer and industry input and workforce system expertise.

A Federal investment can enable formation of partnerships and incentivize active participation of various partners.

PURPOSE
To engage a
conversation on
career
pathways and
career
pathways
systems and
the role of
employers

Starting place -

If your affiliation is with an educational institution or training provider, have you engaged the business community in the development of curricula or educational content:

- Yes
- No

If your affiliation is as a business representative, have you engaged the education or workforce community in the development of a human resources plan:

- Yes
- No

For those that have engaged business community

/* allow to select more than one */

If your affiliation is with an educational institution or training provider, please describe the members of the business community with which you currently:

- Local employers
- Chamber(s) of commerce
- Regional industry organizations
- National industry organizations
- State Workforce Investment Boards
- Unions or employee associations
- Other

What were the primary services provided by business community:

- Consultation on industry-specific questions
- Ad hoc feedback on relevance of course content
- Continuous improvement on the relevance of course content
- Course instruction
- Validate skills or learning objectives
- Work-based learning opportunities such as internships, on the job training, or apprenticeships
- Conditional commitments to hire

For those partnerships that have been sustained over time, what has contributed to the ongoing collaboration:

• Business community recognizes the value of training partnership in delivering

a skilled workforce

- Financial incentive
- Non-financial incentive, such as public recognition

Have Federal investments successfully stimulated the development of partnerships:

- Yes
- No

Are there good examples of this:

<u>PROPOSITION #5a:</u> An online career pathway system is an effective means of moving low skill adults along a career pathway towards middle and high skill occupations.

Overall, do you agree or disagree that an online career pathways system can effectively move low skilled adults along a career pathway towards middle and high skill occupations:

- Agree
- Disagree
- Depends on the occupation
- Depends on the online system

In looking at your institutions' program offerings, in which sectors do you consider the career or educational pathway most complete:

Are there certain sectors where career pathways could be more developed:

What are the biggest challenges to building a fully developed pathway:

- System that enables customers to enter at different points along a pathway
- System that takes into account prior work experience
- System that takes into account prior learning
- Contextualizing remediation
- Accelerating or compressing schedule of courses
- Creating stacked credentials

For which of the challenges would an investment in technology most improve the development of a full career pathway system:

- System that enables customers to enter at different points along a pathway
- System that takes into account prior work experience
- System that takes into account prior learning
- Contextualizing remediation
- Accelerating or compressing schedule of courses
- Creating stacked credentials

What are examples where good work is being done in creating career pathway systems that are supported through online course offerings:

Have Federal investments been successful in encouraging this work:

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

YES: What are examples:

<u>PROPOSITION #6</u>: Low cost and easy to use online programs enable employers, especially small business, to offer training to incumbent workers that increases their opportunities for advancement.

A Federal investment can enable formation of partnerships and incentivize active participation of various partners.

If you are a member of the business community, do you currently use online training to upgrade skills of low-skill employees in your companies:

- Yes
- No

Are suitable online programs available that provide skills training in your industry sector:

- Suitable online training programs are available
- Online training programs are available, but are not suitable for the context of my specific company
- No online training programs are available in my industry sector

For those in the business community that DO offer online training to employees

/* select all that apply */

How do you use online training:

- As an alternative to a classroom-based program
- As a complement to a classroom-based program
- As preparation for a classroom-based program
- As an alternative to on-the-job learning and experience
- As a complement to on-the-job learning and experience
- As preparation for on-the-job learning and experience

/* select all that apply */

What feedback have you received from employees who participate in online training:

- Improved satisfaction of employees
- Improved employee engagement
- Improved quality of service by employees
- Improved retention of employees
- Increased productivity of employees

When considering offering online employee training programs, what are some of the major barriers that you face:

- High cost of developing a technology infrastructure
- Lack of clear information on relative quality or strengths of available training program options
- Uncertainty regarding return on forgone productivity of employee
- Uncertainty regarding post-training employee retention
- Regulatory concerns
- Other

/* select all that apply */

In which areas could technology be leveraged to improve the human resources program at your company:

- Recruiting high quality new talent
- New employee training
- Upgrading education of existing employees with latest job skills
- Building foundational math and literacy skills of existing employees
- Other

Please describe other:

<u>For those in the business community that DO NOT offer online training to employees</u> For those who do not currently use online training for employees, please describe the main barriers to using online training:

As a member of the business community, have you participated in designing training programs that are suitable for use at your company and in your industry?

- Yes
- No

Competency-Based Assessments as the Basis of Career Pathways for Adult Learners <u>PROPOSITION #7:</u> Competency-based education programs designed with the input of employers and educators can be effective in demonstrating whether students have achieved the skills and abilities necessary for particular jobs and sectors.

A Federal investment in an open platform for competency based education with robust assessment tools can incentivize development of CBE programs with robust assessments that lead to validated credentials and catalyze wide-spread adoption and use.

To determine views on challenges of CBE program.

Starting place – Does your organization offer competency based programs:

- Yes
- No

To define barriers and opportunity.

Starting place – Does your organization recognize credit for prior learning:

- Yes
- No

To discuss the issue of assessments.

NO – If you do not currently offer competency based programs, have you considered offering them in the future:

- Yes
- No

Maybe to discuss credit for prior learning?

Do you believe that competency based education is a strategy suitable for training adult learners, including unemployed workers:

- Yes
- No

With respect to adopting CBE

/* rank */

CBE proposes a strategy that benefits adult learners in the following ways. With respect to your customers, please rank these in order of importance:

- Recognition of credit for prior learning
- Emphasis on skills attainment rather than grades
- Frequent feedback on performance during courses
- Format is more accessible to adult learners than traditional seat time format
- Allows learner to move through sections at their own speed
- Other

With respect adoption of CBE

/* select more than one */

What are some of the main barriers your organization would face in offering CBE:

Shift in traditional educator roles

- Technology (at the institution)
- Staff capacity or resources to implement a robust program
- Support from institutional decision makers to support to change educational infrastructure
- Course offerings or programs are not suited with a CBE model
- Partnerships with the business community

Technology: Describe what you think are minimum technology requirements in order for your institution to be able to adopt CBE:

/* select more than one */

Suitable: Are there certain industries where CBE would be a more natural approach:

- Computer science
- Finance
- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Scientific research
- Customer service and retail management
- Other

/* select more than one */

Suitable: Are there certain industries where CBE would not be a good approach:

- Computer science
- Finance
- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Scientific research
- Customer service and retail management
- Other

Suitable: What makes some industries more suited than others:

Suitable: Overall, could an investment in technology increase the suitability of those industries:

- Yes
- No

Partnerships with business community:

/*covered mostly before? */

How can partnerships with the business community be formed so that they become active participants in the development of assessments and validation of skills:

How can these partnerships be sustained over time to ensure that competencies are continually evaluated to ensure alignment with current workplace skill requirements:

With respect to CBE assessment

For members of the education and training community. Would your institution be more willing to consider CBE programs if assessment tools were more readily available:

- Yes
- No

/* select multiple */

For members of the business community. What factors would serve as incentives that would encourage your company to participate in the design of CBE training programs:

- Federal investment
- Opportunity to provide lower cost skill training to existing employees
- Cost savings for recruiting skilled workers
- Other

For those that offer CBE programs:

Please describe the way that assessments were built:

What guidelines for quality and academic rigor were applied in CBE development?

Are these quality guidelines applied to non-CBE programs:

- Yes
- No

What are some examples of robust assessments: